

Table 92. Visits to primary care generalist and specialist physicians, by selected characteristics and type of physician: United States, selected years 1980-2008

(Data are based on reporting by a sample of office-based physicians)

Age, sex, and race	Type of primary care generalist physician <sup>1</sup>											
	All primary care generalists				General and family practice				Internal medicine			
	1980	1990	2000	2008	1980	1990	2000	2008	1980	1990	2000	2008
Percent of all physician office visits												
Total.....	66.2	63.6	58.9	59.6	33.5	29.9	24.1	23.2	12.1	13.8	15.3	16.0
Under 18 years.....	77.8	79.5	79.7	84.9	26.1	26.5	19.9	16.9	2.0	2.9	*	*
18-44 years.....	65.3	65.2	62.1	67.9	34.3	31.9	28.2	29.4	8.6	11.8	12.7	13.4
45-64 years.....	60.2	55.5	51.2	51.5	36.3	32.1	26.4	26.0	19.5	18.6	20.1	20.5
45-54 years.....	60.2	55.6	52.3	53.5	37.4	32.0	27.8	28.4	17.1	17.1	18.7	19.0
55-64 years.....	60.2	55.5	49.9	49.7	35.4	32.1	24.7	23.9	21.8	20.0	21.7	21.9
65 years and over.....	61.6	52.6	46.5	43.9	37.5	28.1	20.2	18.5	22.7	23.3	24.5	23.6
65-74 years.....	61.2	52.7	46.6	44.1	37.4	28.1	19.7	20.3	22.1	23.0	24.5	21.9
75 years and over.....	62.3	52.4	46.4	43.6	37.6	28.0	20.8	16.8	23.5	23.7	24.5	25.3
Sex and age												
Male:												
Under 18 years.....	77.3	78.1	77.7	84.2	25.6	24.1	18.3	16.4	2.0	3.0	*	*
18-44 years.....	50.8	51.8	51.5	57.9	38.0	35.9	34.2	37.1	11.5	15.0	14.4	19.3
45-64 years.....	55.6	50.6	49.4	46.6	34.4	31.0	28.7	27.4	20.5	19.2	19.8	19.2
65 years and over.....	58.2	51.2	43.1	39.5	35.6	27.7	19.3	18.2	22.3	23.3	23.8	21.3
Female:												
Under 18 years.....	78.5	81.1	82.0	85.5	26.6	29.1	21.7	17.4	2.0	2.8	*	*
18-44 years.....	72.1	71.3	67.2	72.1	32.5	30.0	25.3	26.1	7.3	10.3	11.9	10.9
45-64 years.....	63.4	58.8	52.5	54.9	37.7	32.8	24.9	25.1	18.9	18.2	20.2	21.3
65 years and over.....	63.9	53.5	48.9	47.0	38.7	28.3	20.9	18.7	22.9	23.3	25.0	25.3
Race and age <sup>2</sup>												
White:												
Under 18 years.....	77.6	79.2	78.5	84.0	26.4	27.1	21.2	17.9	2.0	2.3	*	*
18-44 years.....	64.8	64.4	61.4	66.6	34.5	31.9	29.2	30.7	8.6	10.6	11.0	12.8
45-64 years.....	59.6	54.2	49.3	51.9	36.0	31.5	27.3	26.8	19.2	17.6	17.1	20.1
65 years and over.....	61.4	51.9	45.1	43.5	36.6	27.5	20.3	18.9	23.3	23.1	23.0	23.0
Black or African American:												
Under 18 years.....	79.9	85.5	87.3	90.0	23.7	20.2	*	*14.3	*2.2	9.8	*	*
18-44 years.....	68.5	68.3	65.0	74.9	31.7	31.9	22.0	25.9	9.0	18.1	20.9	*15.9
45-64 years.....	66.1	61.6	61.7	51.0	38.6	31.2	23.3	20.3	22.6	26.9	35.9	25.9
65 years and over.....	64.6	58.6	52.8	52.9	49.0	28.9	*18.5	18.1	14.2	28.7	33.4	31.7
Type of primary care generalist physician <sup>1</sup>												
	Obstetrics and gynecology				Pediatrics				Specialty care physicians			
	1980	1990	2000	2008	1980	1990	2000	2008	1980	1990	2000	2008
	Percent of all physician office visits											
Total.....	9.6	8.7	7.8	8.3	10.9	11.2	11.7	12.1	33.8	36.4	41.1	40.4
Under 18 years.....	1.3	1.2	*1.1	1.2	48.5	48.9	57.3	65.8	22.2	20.5	20.3	15.1
18-44 years.....	21.7	20.8	20.4	24.1	0.7	0.7	*0.9	1.1	34.7	34.8	37.9	32.1
45-64 years.....	4.2	4.6	4.5	5.0	*	*	*	*	39.8	44.5	48.8	48.5

45-54 years.....	5.6	6.3	5.6	6.1	*	*	*	*	39.8	44.4	47.7	46.5
55-64 years.....	2.9	3.1	3.3	3.9	*	*	*	*	39.8	44.5	50.1	50.3
65 years and over.....	1.4	1.1	1.5	*1.7	*	*	*	*	38.4	47.4	53.5	56.1
65-74 years.....	1.7	1.6	2.0	*1.9	*	*	*	*	38.8	47.3	53.4	55.9
75 years and over.....	1.0	*0.6	*1.0	*	*	*	*	*	37.7	47.6	53.6	56.4

Sex and age

Male:

Under 18 years.....	...	...	...	---	49.4	50.7	58.0	66.8	22.7	21.9	22.3	15.8
18-44 years.....	...	...	...	---	1.0	0.7	*1.7	*	49.2	48.2	48.5	42.1
45-64 years.....	...	...	...	---	*	*	*	*	44.4	49.4	50.6	53.4
65 years and over.....	...	...	...	---	*	*	*	*	41.8	48.8	56.9	60.5

Female:

Under 18 years.....	2.5	2.3	2.1	2.4	47.4	46.9	56.5	64.7	21.5	18.9	18.0	14.5
18-44 years.....	31.7	30.4	29.6	34.1	0.6	0.7	*	1.0	27.9	28.7	32.8	27.9
45-64 years.....	6.7	7.7	7.3	8.3	*	*	*	*	36.6	41.2	47.5	45.1
65 years and over.....	2.1	1.8	2.6	*3.0	*	*	*	*	36.1	46.5	51.1	53.0

Race and age<sup>2</sup>

White:

Under 18 years.....	1.1	1.0	*1.2	1.1	48.2	48.8	54.7	63.8	22.4	20.8	21.5	16.0
18-44 years.....	21.0	21.1	20.4	22.0	0.7	0.7	*0.8	*1.1	35.2	35.6	38.6	33.4
45-64 years.....	4.1	4.8	4.7	4.9	*	*	*	*	40.4	45.8	50.7	48.1
65 years and over.....	1.4	1.2	1.5	*1.6	*	*	*	*	38.6	48.1	54.9	56.5

Black or African American:

Under 18 years.....	2.8	*3.4	*	*	51.2	52.1	75.0	73.4	20.1	14.5	*12.7	*10.0
18-44 years.....	27.1	17.9	20.7	31.6	*	*	*	*	31.5	31.7	35.0	25.1
45-64 years.....	4.8	3.5	*2.4	*4.8	*	*	*	*	33.9	38.4	38.3	49.0
65 years and over.....	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	35.4	41.4	47.2	47.1

\*Estimates are considered unreliable. Data preceded by an asterisk have a relative standard error (RSE) of 20%-30%.

Data not shown have a RSE of greater than 30%.

...Category not applicable.

<sup>1</sup>Type of physician is based on physician's self-designated primary area of practice.

Primary care generalist physicians are defined as practitioners in the fields of general and family practice, general internal medicine, general obstetrics and gynecology, and general pediatrics and exclude primary care specialists.

Primary care generalists in general and family practice exclude primary care specialties, such as sports medicine and geriatrics. Primary care internal medicine physicians exclude internal medicine specialists, such as allergists, cardiologists, and endocrinologists.

Primary care obstetrics and gynecology physicians exclude obstetrics and gynecology specialties, such as gynecological oncology, maternal and fetal medicine, obstetrics and gynecology critical care medicine, and reproductive endocrinology.

Primary care pediatricians exclude pediatric specialists, such as adolescent medicine specialists, neonatologists, pediatric allergists, and pediatric cardiologists.

See Appendix II, Physician specialty.

<sup>2</sup>Estimates by racial group should be used with caution because information on race was collected from medical records. In 2008, race data were missing and imputed for 33% of visits to physician offices.

Information on the race imputation process used in each data year is available in the public use file documentaiton. Available from:

<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/ahcd.htm>.

Starting with 1999 data, the instruction for the race item on the Patient Record Form was changed so that more than one race could be recorded. In previous years only one racial category could be checked. Estimates for racial groups presented in this table are for visits where only one race was recorded. Because of the small number of responses with more than one racial group checked, estimates for visits with multiple races checked are unreliable and are not presented.

NOTES: This table presents data on visits to physician offices and excludes visits to other sites, such as hospital outpatient and emergency departments.

See Appendix II, Office visits.

In 1980, the survey excluded Alaska and Hawaii. Data for all other years include all 50 states and

the District of Columbia. Visits with specialty of physician unknown are excluded. Starting with *Health, United States, 2005*, data for 2001 and later years for physician offices use a revised weighting scheme. See Appendix I, National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey (NAMCS). Data for additional years are available. See Appendix III.

SOURCE: CDC/NCHS,  
National Ambulatory Medical Care Survey.

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